



ORIGINAL ARTICLE


Creative teaching in virtual environments for the development of emotional competencies

Enseñanza creativa en entornos virtuales para el desarrollo de competencias emocionales

Ensino criativo em ambientes virtuais para o desenvolvimento de competências emocionais

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KEYWORDS

creativity, emotional competencies, creative teaching, virtual environment, strategies.

ABSTRACT. The present research conducted at the upper basic level of the "José María Santana Salazar" Educational Unit of the Manta canton, had the objective of analyzing the influence of creative teaching in virtual environments, to develop emotional competencies in students. A qualitative, exploratory approach was used to collect the points of view of teachers and experts on the subject through the interview instrument, applied to a purposive sample. The results showed that teachers include creative strategies through motivational messages, positive attitudes, empathy, curious data, visual dynamics, among others, to create favorable environments for teaching and learning. It is concluded that virtual environments have not allowed the satisfactory development of emotional competencies in students, presenting inconveniences in the adaptation of the current study modality. For this reason, teachers have had to be trained in an accelerated way to cope with the demands of virtual education, applying creative and innovative strategies.

PALABRAS CLAVE

creatividad, competencias emocionales, enseñanza

RESUMEN. Esta investigación realizada en el nivel básico superior de la Unidad Educativa "José María Santana Salazar" del cantón Manta, tuvo como objetivo analizar la influencia de la enseñanza creativa en los entornos virtuales, para desarrollar competencias emocionales en los estudiantes. Se empleó un enfoque cualitativo, de tipo exploratorio que recolectó puntos de vista de docentes y expertos en el tema mediante el instrumento de la entrevista, aplicada a una muestra intencional. Entre los resultados se evidenció que los docentes incluyen estrategias creativas mediante mensajes

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creativa, entorno virtual, estrategias.

motivadores, actitudes positivas, empatía, datos curiosos, dinámicas visuales, entre otros, con la finalidad de crear ambientes favorables para la enseñanza aprendizaje. Se concluye que los entornos virtuales no han permitido desarrollar satisfactoriamente las competencias emocionales en los estudiantes, presentando inconvenientes en la adaptación de la modalidad actual de estudio. Por tal motivo, los docentes han tenido que capacitarse de forma acelerada para afrontar con las exigencias que demanda la educación virtual, aplicando estrategias creativas e innovadoras.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

criatividade, habilidades emocionais, ensino criativo, ambiente virtual, estratégias.

RESUMO. Esta pesquisa realizada no nível básico superior da Unidade Educacional "José María Santana Salazar" do cantão de Manta, teve como objetivo analisar a influência do ensino criativo em ambientes virtuais, para desenvolver as competências emocionais nos alunos. Utilizou-se uma abordagem qualitativa, exploratória, que coletou pontos de vista de professores e especialistas no assunto por meio do instrumento de entrevista, aplicado a uma amostra intencional. Dentre os resultados, foi evidenciado que os professores incluem estratégias criativas por meio de mensagens motivadoras, atitudes positivas, empatia, dados curiosos, dinâmica visual, entre outros, a fim de criar ambientes favoráveis ao ensino-aprendizagem. Conclui-se que os ambientes virtuais não têm permitido que os alunos desenvolvam as competências emocionais de forma satisfatória, apresentando inconvenientes na adaptação à atual modalidade de estudo. Por isso, os professores tiveram que ser formados de forma acelerada para enfrentar as demandas da educação virtual, aplicando estratégias criativas e inovadoras.

1. INTRODUCTION

Virtual education in Ecuador was given through the Educational Plan Learning Together at Home, this, like other Latin American countries, is a step back in terms of technological equipment, competencies, and skills, both in homes and in educational institutions (Aguirre et al., 2017; Torres, 2020). This has generated inconveniences, among which teachers point out the irregularity of connection, audio and perspective problems, unbalanced connection due to bandwidth, distractions, disinterest, social inequalities, delays in education, homes with more than one child for which they do not reach the devices, lack of materials, among others. This, added to a forced social separation that does not allow them to perform healthily, are components that negatively affect the emotional competencies of the entire educational field (Analuisa, 2020; Aron & Milicic, 2017).

According to the research background, Velasco (2016) highlights that the creativity and skills of each student are skills that are acquired and can be improved, requiring prior instruction, through didactic methodologies, resources, or techniques. Vera (2018) and Elisondo (2015) point out that motivation is relevant to facilitate teaching processes. Del Valle (2019), Delgado and Solano (2019) consider that it is necessary to strengthen perception, comparison, reflection, and analysis through creative teaching.

Emotional competencies are an important factor to be developed, therefore strategies must be proposed for the individual recognition of the needs of each student (Carpio & Chimbo, 2020; Humanante et al., 2019), emotions have a primary role in the educational context influencing the performance of students and teachers (A. Fernández, 2020; Guerra & Villasmil, 2019; Serrano & Andreu, 2016). These authors agree that creativity in education is not only in the minds of the subjects, nor does it depend on cognitive factors, it is characterized especially in feelings, emotions, motivations, creating scenarios, and opportunities to teach and learn from another perspective. In addition, it provides tools that help enhance the critical, creative, and innovative thinking of the subject (Extremera & Fernández, 2014; Gómez et al., 2018).

The problem of the research lay in the need to include the emotional contingent in this modality of virtual education, because there is no emotional closeness in this context, according to conversations with the teachers

of the educational unit under study initially this distance education they were combined activities through WhatsApp and the Microsoft Teams platform, but the economic situation was diminishing the possibility of having a face-to-face education through video calls, so it was only possible to maintain a distance education through texts, tasks, and short videos to facilitate the processes. Teachers and students have had to relearn to communicate in virtuality (De Vicenzi, 2020). Manifesting feelings such as fear, frustration, and failure (Cáceres, 2020; P. Fernández & Extremera, 2017), teachers corroborate this by stating that the management of technological resources and the little contact with students has been a challenge for the which have had to be trained quickly.

Similarly, in the Fiscal Education Unit "José María Santana Salazar" located in the Eloy Alfaro parish, in the Manta canton, Manabí province, zone 4, which has approximately 750 students, teaching in virtual environments is limited by the realities expressed in the previous paragraphs, the tutors show through their WhatsApp groups that the main concerns of the students are that they do not understand the teacher's explanation, connection problems, they dislike turning on the camera, they also express that they miss communicating from face-to-face with classmates and teachers, this makes them feel depressed and lose interest in studies; Despite the titanic effort of the teacher to implement new strategies, they are not creative and motivating enough, which causes stress, irritability, and anxiety.

Next, the foundation of creative teaching and its benefits, the profile of the creative teacher, emotional competencies, and strategies to develop emotional competencies in virtual environments is presented.

Creative teaching in virtual environments is increasingly valuable due to its relationship with problem solving and entrepreneurship. Creative teaching consists of strategies based on the development of cognitive abilities, in a transforming attitude; with innovative, flexible, motivating activities that take into account the experience, collaboration, and involvement of the learner (Cuevas, 2014; Lamí et al., 2017). Creativity is having ideas and communicating them; When relating it to education, it is indicated that it is a social value and not only a psychological scientific one (Galvis, 2017; Márquez & Gaeta, 2017; Mora et al., 2018). For this, it is necessary to train teachers in this area, taking into account new technologies (Del Águila et al., 2019; Nella, 2020; Oliva & Flores, 2015).

Among the benefits of creative teaching as a methodological tool it instills values such as respect, solidarity, and tolerance, it is also added the benefits that it incorporates positive experiences for students and facilitates the knowledge of their own culture and respect for the different (Olcina, 2017; Reyes et al., 2014). It is relevant to develop this from an early age so that the child develops his intellectual and emotional coefficient and acquires the ability to solve problems in different ways (Suñe et al., 2012).

The same author emphasizes that it also improves self-esteem, strengthens his personality, allowing him to adapt to different changes that may occur during his life, presenting the following benefits: strengthens confidence, increases self-awareness, facilitates expression, improves problem-solving, self-realization, favors self-assessment, among others.

The profile of the creative teacher must respond to the demands of a society that changes rapidly and to which it is necessary to continually offer creative solutions to unexpected problems (Soriano & González, 2012). Among the competencies of the creative teacher are planning and reflection on educational proposals, recognition of

the diversity of styles, problem-solving, promoting safe emotional contexts, ease of dialogue, promoting autonomy, self-regulation, and the free choice of alternatives (Gómez et al., 2018).

Virtual education has been the solution to continue with students' studies and not delay teaching (UNESCO, 2020; Velásquez, 2020). The current generation has the greater facility to use technological means due to its constant interaction with TIC (Del Valle, 2019). This tool has facilitated and made possible the continuity of education, it has forced teachers and students to use technological tools, for which they have had to prepare, update and be creative, so that the teaching-learning processes are effective despite the distancing.

Camacho (2013) and Camacho et al. (2015) which is an alternative to learning, adjusting to the time and need of the student, creating a learning community through the interaction of the teacher with the student, through virtual platforms, it is characterized by promoting exploration, increasing the experience and digital skills, greater flexibility, commitment, communication, creativity, among others.

Emotional competence refers to the ability of a person to develop and express their emotions, this can be learned and improved; and it is related to social skills to relate to others (Bisquerra & Pérez, 2017). Characteristics include emotional awareness, emotion management, autonomy, positive attitudes, self-esteem, ability to critically analyze, social competence; finally the competencies for life and well-being (Pérez et al., 2019; Pérez & Peña, 2018). The development of emotional competencies in students is essential, teachers must receive the necessary training for the implementation of didactic strategies in the classroom, which allow them to develop their emotional intelligence in children, through innovative and creative activities (Baquero, 2015).

Strategies to develop emotional competencies in virtual learning are essential, and even more so in the educational field. Emotional education requires practical and creative methodologies and strategies, among which Bisquerra (2016) indicates "group dynamics, self-reflection, dialogical reason, games, introspection, relaxation, etc. generally requires a practice that can be understood as a form of training in skills and competencies" (p. 4).

Baquero (2015) recommends as strategies the symbolic game for emotional expressions, role-plays to enhance their ability to negotiate and understand different perspectives, debates; He also recommends music as a means of expression and connection with emotions. Bisquerra (2016), Chías and Zurita (2010) point out the relevance of opening spaces for interaction that allow the free expression of thoughts and feelings, points of view, among others, they point out that it is necessary to talk about fear, give guidelines to problem-solving, teaching relaxation strategies, coping with situations of loss and fear.

In summary, there are various strategies and theories proposed by various authors, but these must be taken about the students and the teacher's competencies, always using creativity and knowledge of their students and socioeconomic contexts as a resource, the emotions that they must face. and the emotional competencies that you have already acquired and those that you need to develop.

In this sense, the general objective of this article was to analyze the influence of creative teaching in virtual environments to develop emotional competencies in students of the upper elementary school of the "José María Santana Salazar" Educational Unit of the Manta canton. This work was important because it examined the characteristics reflected in virtual teaching, where the value of emotional competencies is recognized as an element to be developed for which the teacher should learn creative tactics and tools that improve the quality of

life in educational actors. As a contribution, tools were presented to improve cognitive and emotional skills in students.

2. METHODS

The methodological design was developed under a qualitative approach, with a descriptive and exploratory type of research, since it collected information from primary and secondary sources through a bibliographic review and application of instruments that allowed to deepen and understand the problem studied (Hernández et al., 2014).

It is exploratory, since it prioritized the points of view of teachers and experts on the subject, focusing on existing knowledge, it is also descriptive because the analysis and deduction of the results obtained in the research were detailed, and bibliographic because it addressed theoretical conceptualizations to gather the information that helps to describe and define the variables of the topic to facilitate the understanding of this.

The applied methods were the analytical ones that allowed to consider different sources of information for the elaboration of the work, where the cause, nature, and effect can be observed and analyzed. The deductive served to deduce through creativity, various assumptions, that is; part of previously established truths as general principles, and then apply it to individual cases and thus check its validity.

As research techniques, the questionnaire was used, for which an interview with six semi-structured questions was used as an instrument, validated by Cronbach's alpha coefficient, obtaining 95% reliability, according to Díaz et al. (2013) this instrument is the one with the greatest flexibility, starting from questions posed with the possibility of adapting to the interviewed subjects to clarify, motivate or identify; which sought to obtain accurate and complete information, greater accuracy in the data, the possibility of clarifying doubts and allowing the collection of information from people of all cultural levels.

This investigation was carried out in the Fiscal Education Unit "José María Santana Salazar" of the Manta canton, with a total population of 8 teachers of the upper elementary school. The sampling was intentional or non-probabilistic, this occurs when the elements selected for the sample are chosen by the criteria of the researcher (Hernández et al., 2014). For the sample, the total population was used because it was a minimum amount, with the tools applied to the 8 teachers of the upper elementary school, the authority in charge of the pedagogical area, and an expert from another educational institution who has incorporated emotional competencies in their curriculum.

The primary information was collected through an interview directed both to teachers and to other experts, which was carried out using a virtual zoom platform. The secondary information was taken from accredited bibliographic sources that served to theoretically support the research. The results will be processed using analytical methods and interpreted in the light of creative education sciences.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

About the exploratory investigation of the primary sources, the following results were obtained according to the dimensions investigated:



Creative strategies applied in classes to achieve a favorable emotional climate

Regarding this dimension, a teacher from the total study population referred that he uses videos, chats, motivating messages for a favorable climate among peers, the interrelation between students and teachers collaboratively and cooperatively, also applying interdisciplinarity and multiculturalism. On the other hand, the others agreed that attitude is relevant to creating a good climate, arriving with a positive attitude and smiles, which facilitates creating bonds of brotherhood, respect, trust, commitment, and empathy, they also cited brainstorming, mind maps, visual dynamics that capture attention and facilitate interaction, creating a favorable and participatory environment. The expert Ibarra (2021) in this regard indicated that "it is necessary to establish and socialize rules, norms, and guidelines to strengthen a conducive environment in the educational unit".

In this regard, Arón and Milicic (2017) indicate that it is necessary to use creative strategies to create a positive social climate and achieve the development of students, for which it is necessary to promote self-motivation, through projects, trust, emphasizing independence, autonomy, accepting the differences and evaluating the criteria of the students. These statements confirm the need to propose creative strategies in the classroom to achieve a positive climate in which each student can take advantage of their potential, fostering positive relationships between staff and students.

Creative strategies to develop emotional competencies

Regarding this dimension, two teachers interviewed (Alonzo, 2021) and (Patiño, 2021) indicated that they include strategies of this type by establishing links with their students, knowing their tastes and interests, adapting their classes with those resources that are the subject of interest, curious facts that awaken you to discover. The rest coincided on aspects such as motivation, participation, trust, examples of daily life, inspirational phrases, listening to opinions, resolving conflicts, artistic education and visual resources, motivational and inclusive videos that promote solidarity, work in a team, respect for oneself and others, in addition to the constant encouragement with recognition for their effort and dedication. The expert consulted Ibarra (2021) regarding this approach states that "it has allowed students to seek solutions for themselves, working on different virtual platforms through cooperative games".

In this regard, Betancourt (2020), Pérez and Peña (2018) indicate that applying creative strategies for the development of social and emotional competencies will translate into an improvement in performance levels, as well as providing skills to students for the demands of the knowledge, technology and information society. Chiappe and Cuesta (2013) in which it is possible to develop these competencies by respecting the opinions of others, the recognition and appreciation of differences, and adequate management of some skills such as empathy, verbal and non-verbal communication, meaning humor, understanding attitude, among others.

According to the previous statements, it is necessary to use creative and innovative strategies for the development of emotional competencies, allowing students to express and recognize their emotions, free interactions, empathy, and constant communication facilitate these training processes.

Role of the creative teacher in virtual environments

The interviewee López (2021) stated that "the teacher today must be competitive, innovative, motivating, generate in students the interest to investigate, discover, create, train beings capable of solving problems peacefully." On

the other hand, the others agreed that the role of the teacher has changed and has been limited, becoming a motivator, facilitator, therefore it must be innovative, creative, promote a flexible and participatory environment among educational actors.

Al respecto Noris y Aguilera (2018) argue that the role of the teacher is fundamental in virtual environments when creatively using TIC. Skills and abilities must be acquired to correctly guide student learning, thus stimulating problem-solving and the collaborative construction of knowledge.

According to these statements, the role of the teacher today from virtual environments has become more significant, a challenge that requires prior training, to know how to integrate technological resources effectively to obtain better results and offer the student tools and guides to help you develop your learning process.

Emotional competences in the planning and design of classes

The total population under study coincided in this dimension, that the competencies included in its planning are confidence, tolerance, empathy, leadership, self-esteem, self-control, patience, autonomy, stress control, responsibility, decision making, empathy, and interpersonal relationships. The expert Ibarra (2021) pointed out that "it is also necessary to evaluate these competencies through different aspects such as emotional awareness, emotional regulation, social competence, and life skills for well-being".

According to Rodríguez (2018) and Mayer et al. (2016) it is essential to include emotional competencies such as empathy, self-awareness, self-motivation, and self-regulation in the academic curriculum, due to their important contribution to the integral development of the student. About these statements, it is undeniable the importance of including emotional competencies in curricular planning, taking into account the techniques and strategies necessary to develop them.

Benefits in developing emotional competencies in learners

Another category analyzed was emotional competencies for the benefit of students when teachers apply them. 6 of the 8 teachers indicate that adequate emotional education helps to better manage emotions, therefore it is essential for the comprehensive development of students; the expert consulted Ibarra (2021) stated that "among the advantages are that it improves social factors such as generosity, empathy, and collaboration; reduces aggressive behaviors, reinforces moods, feelings of happiness and optimism; increases emotional self-knowledge, improves coexistence and social skills, among others".

In this regard, Palomares (2014) argues that it has been shown that the development of emotional competencies and feelings influences all learning since they contribute predisposition, the reduction of conflict, reduction of risk behaviors, improvement of the classroom climate, among others Benefits. It coincides with Serrano and Andreu (2016) who point out that the application of these has shown innumerable benefits in the educational context such as better physical and mental health, greater well-being, less drug use, reduction of aggressive behaviors, as well as better academic performance.

Methodologies to develop emotional competencies in a creative way

Regarding this approach, the interviewees López (2021) and Zambrano (2021) agreed that project-based learning is one of the most suitable methodologies. The other interviewees cited methodologies such as Problem-based learning, cooperative learning, gamification, PowerPoint, videos, brainstorming, the Toolbox. The expert Ibarra (2021) highlights the development of didactic resources that allow providing information, motivating students, guiding learning, developing skills, evaluating knowledge and skills, and providing spaces for expression and creation.

In this regard, Palomares (2014) indicates that it is necessary to apply creative methodologies to promote emotional competencies in students through individual, team, and group activities that allow the significant improvement of these skills. Also, Pérez and Filella (2019) indicate that the most effective educational methodology for the development of emotional competencies is one that takes into account the previous knowledge of children and adolescents and takes into account their experiences, interests, and personal and social needs. In summary, they agree that many activities can be carried out, different methodologies according to subject and area to keep students motivated and attentive.

The present study was limited by the current social and mobility restrictions that did not allow observing the teacher in the development of the classes, also adding that promoting emotional competencies in a virtual context has been a challenge for all those involved, also considering it a challenge. A limited number of interviews due to the availability of time in the face of the current broad occupations of teachers, however, the data was concise and sufficient to respond to the dimensions of the research, for which it is suggested to carry out future research in terms of creative teaching and the competencies that a teacher must have to face the challenges of virtuality.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Creative teaching in current virtual environments was analyzed, recognizing that it has not contributed positively to the development of emotional competencies in students of the upper basic of the Educational Unit understudy, students and teachers have had a series of inconveniences in the adaptation processes in which they are still, have needed to be trained and updated in an accelerated way, which has hampered their creativity and emotions; therefore it is necessary to reinforce the resources and strategies to facilitate learning.

It was identified that teachers include creative strategies through motivating messages, positive attitudes, empathy, visual and dynamic tools that seek to capture attention and facilitate interaction to achieve learning of their students; It was also highlighted that it has been difficult for teachers to be creative in virtual environments, having limitations in the adaptation of students, which requires more work together to find the appropriate tools that facilitate educational processes.

It was determined that teachers include emotional competencies such as empathy, confidence, self-control, responsibility, patience, among others, through individual and group work; In addition to techniques such as games and evaluations that facilitate the development of students, this is possible in virtual environments as long as teachers are trained in creative strategies that allow them to motivate and stimulate their students.

It was described that it is possible to work on emotional competencies in virtual environments through creative teaching tools such as the empowerment of individual talents, project-based learning, cooperative work, role change, problem-solving, invention, and use of technology to maintain the attention, concentration, and motivation of the students; for this, the role of the teacher is essential.

Future lines of research are suggested in terms of creative and innovative strategies that allow the development of the emotional competencies of students, as well as the updating of teachers and curricular plans that do not respond to the changing needs of students in virtual environments.

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